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**NEBRASKANS USE WEB SITE TO CONTACT
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

LINCOLN – Nebraskans are using the Internet to contact the Public Service Commission, and one facet of that usage helps stretch the Commission's budget.

Beginning last October, the state's residents have been able to file complaints online. Complaints may be filed online with Commission departments handling natural gas, manufactured housing, telecommunications, and transportation. In a report to the Commission at its first April meeting, staff analyst Tyler Frost noted that 418 online complaints have been filed in a six-month period that ended March 31. Sixty-one percent of the complaints received by the Commission in March of this year were received via the Internet.

Most of the complaints filed with the Commission were addressing wireless and wireline telecommunications services. The number surged in March with 240 online complaints on two issues: SPAM text messaging and Alltel's reverse toll billing. The complaints received online are almost totally handled online, which cuts the handling time significantly, thus enabling Commission staff to work on other issues.

Chairman Jerry Vap, of McCook, noted that the 240 complaints were handled with one inquiry and one response message on each issue. "The postage saved alone exceeded \$75," Vap said.

If a Commission staff member had to personally visit with each complainant over the telephone, as was the case prior to the inauguration of online complaint reporting, at least three days of one person's time would have been consumed by the SPAM and billing issues, the Commission estimated.

In addition to saving the Commission's staff and other resources, complaints online may be filed 24 hours a day, seven days a week as opposed to only during business hours on weekdays under the former system. A total of 195 complaints have been filed from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m., hours the Commission normally is closed, since the advent of online filing. Of that number, 43 were submitted on Saturdays or Sundays.

The Commission's web site (www.psc.state.ne.us) was redesigned during the summer of 2002 by Saleem Mohammed, then an intern from the University of Nebraska.

"Anyone who is interested in what the Public Service Commission is doing should be using this web site," Vap said. "In addition to complaint forms, the web site includes general information about the Commission and its programs, agendas for Commission meetings, and access to applications and other forms people need."

Vap said the web site is a work in progress. "It is under constant revision with a focus on how it may be improved to better serve the people of Nebraska."

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